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SUBJECT: U.S. DEBRIEFS ALLIES ON THE MOSCOW SUMMIT

Classified By: Ambassador Ivo Daalder for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d)

11. (C) SUMMARY: On July 8, Assistant Secretary of State for European and Eurasian Affairs Philip Gordon and Assistant Secretary of State for Verification, Compliance and Implementation Rose Gottemoeller briefed the North Atlantic Council (NAC) on the outcomes of the recent U.S.-Russia summit in Moscow, paying particular attention to the discussion related to a START follow-on treaty. Permanent Representatives (PermReps) expressed appreciation for the timeliness and clarity of the briefings. They also asked numerous questions on Georgia, offense/defense linkage, tactical nuclear weapons, and the Conventional Armed Forces in Europe (CFE) Treaty. END SUMMARY.

U.S.-Russia Summit - What We Achieved

12. (C) In a July 8 briefing to the North Atlantic Council, Assistant Secretary Gordon reiterated President Obama's view that continuing disagreements between the U.S. and Russia did not preclude the nations' ability to "turn the page" and find agreement on matters of common concern. Norway and Spain reflected the consensus view of Allies in endorsing the U.S. two-track approach of working with Russia on issues of common agreement while also being frank about areas of disagreement.

13. (C) A/S Gordon announced that the U.S. had achieved its goals in Moscow without "papering over" lingering disagreements. He noted the surprising success that the U.S. had achieved in Moscow, particularly with the Joint Statement on Missile Defense (MD). Heading into the summit, it had appeared unlikely that Moscow would cooperate in this difficult area. Moscow had been "testing" the U.S., Gordon said, and our principle-based resolve not to give in on issues such as the European Missile Defense Site had led to Russian cooperation on that issue at the summit. Also noteworthy were the agreement allowing lethal materials to pass through Russian territory in transit to Afghanistan and the Joint Understanding on further reductions of and limitations to strategic offensive arms, affecting both warheads and delivery vehicles. A/S Gordon announced that in Spring 2010 the U.S. will host a follow-up summit on nuclear security, with Russia hosting a subsequent meeting.

The post-START negotiations

14. (C) Assistant Secretary Gottemoeller briefed that the summit followed-up the dialogue launched by Presidents Obama and Medvedev in London on April 1, informing PermReps that much progress had been achieved in the three months that had elapsed. Those achievements included the development of a framework and basic substantive points for a new post-START treaty, with work on the text to begin the week of July 12 in Geneva. She said that Russia had bought into the basic idea of developing a hybrid of the Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (START) and Strategic Offensive Reduction Treaty (SORT) treaties, combining the verification mechanisms of START with adapted counting mechanisms taken from SORT. This new hybrid treaty would combine the predictability of START with the flexibility of SORT. Instead of just limits on warheads, as provided for by SORT, this new hybrid would also allow for limits on strategic delivery vehicles, as provided for by START. A/S Gottemoeller stated that perhaps the biggest achievement of this summit was that the Russians agreed to a modification of the attribution rules of the START Treaty, which would allow for more thorough, intrusive verification of warheads on delivery vehicles. Another achievement she noted was on the "freedom to mix" proposal, which provides that despite prescribed limits on warheads and delivery vehicles, each side would maintain the freedom to determine its own force structure.

15. (C) A/S Gottemoeller admitted that three problem areas remained. First, Russia had raised the issue of "upload potential" of warheads or delivery systems. Second, in regards to the offensive/defensive relationship, Russia tried to insert a "minor anti-ballistic missile" treaty into the

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negotiations, but the United States had insisted that the negotiations were only to focus on strategic offensive arms, consistent with the London tasking by the two presidents. Third, Russia remained concerned about conventional long-range or "global strike" systems for which, A/S Gottemoeller replied, more transparency would be needed.

16. (C) A/S Gottemoeller also briefed the NAC on two issues of consequence to the Alliance. First, the two sides agreed to mention in the preamble the strategic inter-relationship between offensive and defensive forces. She made the point that this statement did not represent a new bargain, noting that this language was included in all previous strategic arms agreements, as well as repeated by former President Bush in May 2001. Second, Assistant Secretary Gottemoeller stated that sub-strategic nuclear weapons would not be covered in current negotiations, but would be included in future negotiations following close consultations on this issue within the Alliance.

17. (C) In response to many questions from Allies on Russia's linkage of the U.S. national missile defense so-called "Third Site" architecture in Poland and the Czech Republic and the development of a new framework agreement, A/S Gordon answered that Russia gave up its insistence on the linkage when it saw that the U.S. was not prepared to give in on this point. He clarified that any decision to deploy assets to a European site will be driven solely by the threat from Iran, and the technology and cost-effectiveness of an MD system, all of which were the subject of the ongoing U.S. review, and not by any third party.

18. (C) Some Allies asked if the CFE Treaty was included as part of the broader discussion. A/S Gordon answered that it did not form a significant part of the discussion, although PM Putin had made familiar arguments that the CFE Treaty was unfair to Russia and that Russia should never have ratified it. A/S Gottemoeller reported that she would have a bilateral meeting with her Russian counterpart on CFE before the end of August, adding that the U.S. would continue to consult with Allies.

19. (C) In response to numerous questions about Iran,

Assistant Secretary Gordon said that Russia remained unconvinced that applying further pressure and sanctions on Iran would deter its nuclear aspirations.

But Differences Remain

¶10. (C) A/S Gordon briefed that the U.S. had made clear continuing differences with Moscow over Georgia and Ukraine. President Obama had flatly rejected any Russian notion of privileged spheres of influence within Europe, and President Obama had declared that nations remained free to choose their alliances as they wish.

Where Does this Leave NATO

¶11. (C) After Spain asked if Russia preferred negotiating bilaterally with the U.S. rather than multi-laterally with NATO through the NATO-Russia Council, Canada observed that whenever U.S.-Russia relations were on the upswing NATO-Russia relations often suffered. In response to a related question by Romania, Assistant Secretary Gordon said that the Russians had seemed more forthcoming, practical, constructive and ready to move forward in Moscow than they had been at the NATO-Russia Council Ministerial meeting in Corfu in June. But the U.S. had no interest in making progress in the bilateral forum at the expense of doing so in the NATO-Russia Council (NRC).

The Medvedev Security Proposal

¶12. (C) France asked if Russia elaborated on its proposed new European Security Architecture. Assistant Secretary Gordon replied that the Russians only raised it

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briefly in response to President Obama's statement that each country should have the freedom to choose its own alliances.

Human Rights

¶13. (C) In response to a question, A/S Gordon briefed that the President's speech at the New Economic School addressed the need to move beyond the antiquated, 19th century, Russian notion of zero-sum geopolitics. In many of his private meetings, as well as in the speech, President Obama had raised the issues of democracy and human rights.

Comment

¶14. (C) PermReps roundly praised this "near-real time" briefing and the honesty of the Assistant Secretaries before the NAC. Now the task before NATO is to weigh the impact of the U.S.-Russia summit and its consequences for the Alliance and Europe. This briefing both informed that debate, and paved the way for better cooperation from Allies who recognize the United States is committed to NATO and keeping its members informed.

¶15. (U) Assistant Secretary Gordon and Assistant Secretary Gottemoeller have cleared this message.
DAALDER